

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #71B-13

Building Date: 1901

Building Name: Edward Lancaster House

Location: 8401 Chestnut Avenue, Bowie, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The Edward Lancaster House is a two-story frame gable-roof dwelling. It is cross gabled, and built in the shape of a T, a variation of the gable front and wing plan. Sheltering the south, west and north elevations of the wing is a one-story hip-roof porch which is supported by Tuscan columns and has a plain balustered railing; the porch rests on a concrete block foundation. The wing joins at right angles the one-bay-by-three-bay main block of the house. The roof is covered with patterned tin and there are two corbelled brick chimneys at the ridge, one centered in the main block, the other in the west wing. The cornice is boxed with crown molding, and is returned at all gable ends. The building rests on a brick foundation which encloses a basement. There is a one-story addition on the east of the main block, its gable ridge at right angles to that of the main block. There is a modern semi-octagonal bay at its south facade, and a one-story shed addition on the north.

Significance

The Edward Lancaster House is a modest cross-gable frame dwelling, typical of the houses being built in Prince George's County at the turn of the century. It stands on a group of lots in the southeast part of the town of Huntington, now known as Bowie. By 1880, approximately 60 families had settled there; a majority of the working population was employed by the Railroad company. The Lancaster family settled in Bowie in 1900. Edward Lancaster was the Baggage Master for the Railroad company; he bought up a group of lots which were offered at tax sale, and in 1901 constructed a T-shaped cross-gable house in which he raised his family. Several small additions have been built onto the house, but have not altered the appearance of the building from the front. The house remained in the Lancaster family until the death of Lancaster's widow, Lula, in 1942. Modest in plan and in detail, the Lancaster House is still a handsome building and is a visual landmark on one of the principal streets of the town of Bowie.

Acreage: 12,500 square feet

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Edward Lancaster House

and/or common Komsa House

### 2. Location

street & number 8401 Chestnut Avenue ☐ not for publicationcity, town Bowie ☐ vicinity of congressional district 5

state Md. county Prince George's

### 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

### 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name John Komsa

street &amp; number 8401 Chestnut Ave. telephone no.:

city, town Bowie state and zip code Md. 20715

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 5653

street &amp; number Main Street folio 535

city, town Upper Marlboro state Md.

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. P.G.#71B-13

### Condition

☒ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☒ unaltered  
☐ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Edward Lancaster House is a two-story frame gable-roof dwelling. It is cross gabled, and built in the shape of a T, a variation of the gable front and wing plan. It stands on one of the lots originally platted in 1870 for Huntington City, now known as Bowie.

The long (one bay by two bay) west wing of the house fronts westward on Chestnut Avenue, but the principal entrance is in the second bay of its south facade through a modern door with plain board surround. Sheltering the south, west and north elevations of the wing is a one-story hip-roof porch which is supported by Tuscan columns and has a plain balustered railing. The columns, rail, and cornice of the porch are painted blue; the porch rests on a concrete block foundation. The wing joins at right angles the one-bay-by-three-bay main block of the house.

The building is sided with rectangular lapped shingle painted white. Windows are generally 6/6 double hung sash with plain board surrounds painted blue. There are no shutters. The roof is covered with patterned tin and there are two corbelled brick chimneys at the ridge, one centered in the main block, the other in the west wing. The cornice is boxed with crown molding, and is returned at all gable ends. Details, including corner boards and cornices, are painted blue. The building rests on a brick foundation which encloses a basement; there is a bulkhead entrance to the basement centered at the north gable end of the main block.

There is a one-story addition on the east of the main block, its gable ridge at right angles to that of the main block. The planes of its roof are of uneven pitch. There is a modern semi-octagonal bay at its south facade, and a one-story shed addition on the north.

There are two outbuildings north of the house. To the west is a two-bay shed-roof garage; it has German siding painted white, with blue trim. To the east is a gable-roof concrete block storage building, painted white. Immediately south of the storage building is a very large old willow oak. The house is approached from the south, by an unpaved drive which runs north from 13th Street and then curves east between the house and the outbuildings.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. P.G.#71B-13

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1901

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Edward Lancaster House is a modest cross-gable frame dwelling, typical of the houses being built in Prince George's County at the turn of the century. It stands on a group of lots in the southeast part of the town of Huntington, now known as Bowie.

The town of Huntington was established in 1870 at the junction of the Popes Creek line of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, and the branch line into Washington. A Propectus describing the proposed new town was published and circulated in 1870. It offered building lots for sale, many of which were soon purchased.<sup>1</sup> By 1880, approximately 60 families had settled there; a majority of the working population was employed by the Railroad company.<sup>2</sup>

Before the end of the nineteenth century, the town of Huntington had come to be known as Bowie, after Oden Bowie, president of the B&P Railroad and Governor of Maryland 1869 to 1872. By 1900, there were 100 dwellings in the town; in this year, the Lancaster family settled in Bowie. Edward Lancaster was the Baggage Master for the Railroad company; he bought up a group of lots which were offered at tax sale, and in 1901 constructed a T-shaped cross-gable house in which he raised his family.<sup>3</sup> Several small additions have been built onto the house, but have not altered the appearance of the building from the front.

The house remained in the Lancaster family until the death of Lancaster's widow, Lula, in 1942. Since that time, it has had a series of owners, including an eight year period when it was owned by the Bowie Volunteer Fire Department.<sup>4</sup>

The Lancaster family has been important to the town of Bowie. George Lancaster, son of Edward, grew up in this house, and went on to become a physician. He practiced in Bowie and lived in the house on 11th Street built by Dr. Nelson Ryon (cf. #71B-2-3). Several of George Lancaster's children still live in the Bowie area.

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## 10. Geographical Data

Tax Map #29 Block B  
Lots 39-43  
Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

H | | | | | | | | | |

**11. Form Prepared By**

state Md.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

The Edward Lancaster house is typical of the modest cross-gable houses which were being built at the turn of the century. Modest in plan and in detail, it is still a handsome building and is a visual landmark on one of the principal streets of the town of Bowie.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> Prospectus of Huntington, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> Census for Prince George's County, District #14, 1880.

<sup>3</sup> Census for Prince George's County, District #14, 1900; Prince George's County Tax Assessments; Prince George's County Deed #16:67.

<sup>4</sup> Prince George's County Deeds, #898:178; #939:414; #1706:327; #2095:81; #3504:927; #4480:351, and #5653:535; Prince George's County Estate files, #4058, #6530, and #7265.

R-R

WILLIAM T  
HUBBERT  
5373 / 083  
480A. P.213

R-R

R-55

LAUREL - BONIE

71B-2-1

71B-2-6

71B-2-7

71B-2-5

C-C

71B-2-2

R-55

C-C

71B-2-4

71B-2-3

71B-13

R-R

I-1

NEW JERSEY  
STEEL CORP.  
5545/680

NANCY BROWN  
4182/813

R-R

71B-12

71B-11

PG: 71B-13





PG#71B-13

Edward Lancaster House  
Prince George's County, MD  
Susan G. Pearl  
Northwest 3/4 elevation  
March 1986  
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#71B-13

Edward Lancaster House  
Prince George's County, MD  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1986  
North elevation  
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#71B-13

Edward Lancaster House  
Prince George's County, MD  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1986  
Southwest 3/4 elevation  
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#71B-13

Edward Lancaster House  
Prince George's County, MD  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1986  
West elevation  
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD





PG#71B-13

Edward Lancaster House  
Prince George's County, MD  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1986  
Outbuildings, view to east  
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD